

## "Cities of the Future" in Norway. A partnership program to manage climate change and climate adaptation

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*Cities of the Future is a partnership between the state, the industry and the 13 largest cities in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, manage climate change and make cities better places to live in. Cities of the program will cooperate in five major areas: land use and transportation, consumption and waste, energy in buildings, climate adaptation and improving the quality of urban environment.*



Panorama of Oslo seafront. Photo: Pedro Ardila

Cities are now home to half the world's population. Cities are already the largest consumer of energy and accounts for 80 percent of all greenhouse gases in the world.

In Norway up to 80 percent of the population live in cities and towns. In other words, if cities fail to reduce their emissions, it will make a big difference.

It should also be mentioned that eco-friendly cities are good cities to live in.

### **Solid, good cities**

Cities of the future are built dense, so that we live closely together. We can walk and cycle instead of using cars, and thus we pollute less. With fewer cars and roads there will also be more space for bike paths and parks. It makes the city more beautiful - and a bit healthier. Besides, the parks and green corridors take care of the intense rainwater we have to expect in the future.

### **Cooperation**

We must work together to build cities for the future. With industry, so that climate-friendly products become more common everyday. With the state, to avoid placing the big work sites where there is no access by bus or tram. With the population, so that we constantly build cities where people want to live. Cities of the Future will provide precisely this cooperation.

Cities of the Future program will help municipalities to share their good ideas for climate-friendly urban development with each other - and to collaborate with industry, region and state.

The program runs from 2008 to 2014. The 13 cities are Oslo, Bærum, Drammen, Sarpsborg, Fredrikstad, Porsgrunn, Skien, Kristiansand, Sandnes, Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim and Tromsø.

The cities of the program will work in five major areas: land use and transportation, consumption and waste, energy in buildings, climate adaptation and better quality of urban environment. Each area is organized as a network with various representatives from each city.

Cities of the Future house about half the population of Norway, that passed 5 million habitants in 2012, thus giving us the ability to reduce our emissions to make a difference in our own scale.

Some of the cities are big geographical zones because they are "twin cities", cities that lie so close together that a close cooperation on climate change is natural and necessary.

But of course, the cooperation is even broader than that:

- The private sector is an official partner since May 2009.
- We will mobilize people and organizations to participate in the work.
- We will use available resources better, develop more effective measures and try out new measures to promote climate-and environment-friendly cities.
- The efforts will provide measurable results and good practice examples which will also benefit other cities and urban regions.
- We will contribute to policy development on all levels.
- State and local government will lead by example.
- Through the Cities of the Future, both cities and the state develop cooperation with regional authorities.

The cities have already drawn up an action program. In addition, industry, organizations and residents have been involved. Action programs will in turn be the basis of binding agreements between cities and the state.